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**General Assembly**
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**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development**

**Security Council**
**Sixty-third year**

## Identical letters dated 1 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the joint statement of the Presidents of Ukraine and Georgia dated 30 April 2008 (annex I), the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on increasing the number of peacekeepers in Abkhazia, Georgia dated 29 April 2008 (annex II) and the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 30 April 2008 (annex III).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 16, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasania**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

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## Annex I to the identical letters dated 1 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

## Joint statement of the Presidents of Ukraine and Georgia

30 April 2008

The Presidents of Ukraine and Georgia discussed the existing situation in terms of resolution of the conflicts in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali Region, Georgia. They expressed their concern over the Russian Federation's attempts to call into question the territorial integrity of Georgia by elevating the status of relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Thus the self-recognized republics are in fact encouraged to secede from Georgia.

Ukraine and Georgia condemn the recent statements of Russian officials on the possible use by Russia of "military means" for the protection of its own citizens in Abkhazia. It can be interpreted as nothing but a threat of the use of force, which represents an open provocation against Georgia.

Ukraine and Georgia reaffirm that resolution of the Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian conflicts is possible exclusively through peaceful means, in the framework of resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, in particular, Security Council resolution 1808 (2008) of 15 April 2008. These resolutions call on the United Nations Member States to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

The Russian Federation's recent decisions prevent the implementation of these principles, create added tension and undermine efforts towards the establishment of peace in the region, in which Russia itself participates. Ukraine and Georgia call on the Russian Federation to refuse to implement the announced plans with respect to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Ukraine is ready to consider the issue of its participation in the peacekeeping operations together with other parties concerned.

Ukraine supports the new initiative of the President of Georgia directed towards peaceful resolution of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict and relies on a constructive response of the Abkhaz side.

## Annex II to the identical letters dated 1 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

### Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

29 April 2008

Today the Russian Federation took yet another irresponsible and provocative step by unilaterally increasing the number of so-called peacekeepers in Abkhazia, Georgia, without seeking the prior approval and consent of the Georgian Government.

The Government of Georgia strongly condemned this act of aggression disguised as a peacekeeping operation.

The Georgian State border at the River Psou was violated when armoured vehicles, heavy artillery and additional military units entered the territory. The scale of this provocation was made evident by a statement of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation (29 April 2008) according to which 15 new checkpoints have been opened on the administrative border of Abkhazia, Georgia, without Government of Georgia permission.

Georgia has consistently drawn the attention of the international community to the destabilizing role of the Russian military contingent in the conflict zones. Today's large-scale military build-up in Abkhazia, Georgia, represents yet another act of aggression and dangerous new step by the Russian Federation that increases the risk of escalation of the conflict, and threatens peace and security in the whole region.

Georgia appeals to the international community and international organizations, including members of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, to take urgent and firm actions to stop the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Georgia.

## Annex III to the identical letters dated 1 May 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

### Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

30 April 2008

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation issued statements on 29 April 2008 warning that the Russian Federation will increase the contingent of the collective peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia, Georgia.

Georgia has repeatedly emphasized that Russia's armed contingent is a major factor of destabilization in the conflict zones. Build-up of Russian troops in Abkhazia, Georgia, involves an extremely dangerous provocation, which increases the risk of escalation to an alarming extent and poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

Georgia maintains that Russia's deployment of additional troops on the territory of Abkhazia under the guise of CIS collective peacekeeping forces contradicts the decisions adopted within the CIS framework and the universally recognized norms and principles of international law.

The status and the scope of competences of the collective peacekeeping forces are regulated by the 22 August 1994 decision of the CIS Council of Heads of State. The first paragraph of this decision stipulates that the "plan on deployment of collective forces shall be agreed in accordance with the 1994 Moscow Agreement on Ceasefire and Separation of Forces". The Moscow Agreement is based on commitments that are in line with the universally recognized principles of international law and reflected in established practice for peacekeeping operations, which specify that a peacekeeping operation may take place exclusively with the consent of a State concerned. This consent implies not only general acceptance of the operation but also approval for the implementation of distinct actions within the mandate, for which such consent of a sovereign State is a sine qua non. This is in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity of States, inviolability of borders and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

It is with due consideration of the foregoing that the 22 August 1994 decision of the CIS Council of Heads of State and the 1994 Moscow Agreement on Ceasefire and Separation of Forces determine the mandate of peacekeepers and the geographical area of their operation. The Moscow Agreement, in particular its article 2 (f), and the protocol thereto, clearly define the territory where peacekeepers enjoy freedom of movement. In all other cases, respectively, any movement of peacekeepers as well as the setting up of an additional number of checkpoints and deployment of contingent requires Georgia's consent. The stationing of an armed contingent on the territory of Abkhazia under the mandate of collective peacekeeping forces, without the consent of Georgia, will hence be considered an infringement of Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty and interference in its internal affairs.

The arguments provided by the Russian side to justify the need for increasing its contingent are totally baseless given that the Georgian side complies unequivocally with its commitments and the actions undertaken by it are in full compliance with international law and the 17 May 1994 Moscow Agreement on Ceasefire and Separation of Forces. Russia's use of such arguments for deploying additional troops suggests that the Russian Federation is being transformed into a party to the conflict and its actions, rather than contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region, represent an infringement of the sovereignty of the neighbouring State.

The Georgian side urges the Russian Federation to abstain from taking such actions. Otherwise these steps will be assessed as an act of aggression and a gross violation of the fundamental principles of international law.